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MEMORANDUM FOR:

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Office of the Executive Director-Comptroller

SUBJECT : National Interdepartmental Seminar

REFERENCE : Memo dated 28 October 1971, from  
Acting Executive Director-Comptroller,  
Same Subject

*Bill -*

1. I have consistently supported the opinion of the majority of the Agency's senior officers that there should be a major adjustment in our participation in, and support for, the NIS. If complete withdrawal is not considered proper then, at minimum, the attendance quota for the seminars should be greatly reduced.

2. While we think the restructuring of the course might render it useful to more agencies of government and thus a broader range of officials, it is now less operational in content and so of less value to CS officers. We do not feel that the seminar can be regarded as an integrated element in our training programs; nor does it contribute significantly to the career development of our officers. By the time CS officers reach the grade and position appropriate for enrollment in the seminar they, most often, have had a good deal of exposure to interagency relations and the policy making process.

3. We agree that it would be appropriate for State to take a leading role in the seminar but in fact, their record of enrollment has been among the poorest. As for Mr. Matteson's comment on participation by the military, it seems probable that the seminar has greater value to their officers who might not otherwise acquire a knowledge of the policy making process. Also, the military seems always to have an abundance of personnel available for such courses.


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4. This leaves only the question of the value derived from the contribution our officers make to the seminar. The presumption is that much is accomplished by this means in improving the Agency's "image," but this is largely theoretical and whether or not the gain is commensurate with the time expended by 48 senior agency officers per year, is questionable.

5. As you may know, we recently went over this ground at length with Colonel White, and in spite of a very earnest plea by Hugh Cunningham, we agreed that the Agency's quota should be reduced from eight to four. I made it clear at that time that I would hope to limit the CS contribution to one of these four, although in extremis we would make an effort to provide a second person. It is not easy to spring properly qualified and graded officers for the many outside courses and we do our best, but when I consider that the State Department, which is responsible for the course, had only two of its people enrolled in the current running, Bob Matteson's pleas must fall on my deaf ears.

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Thomas H. Karamessines  
~~Deputy Director for Plans~~

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